

**Memorandum of the Meeting
Regular Study Session/Meeting
Twenty-Eighth Town Council of Highland
Monday, July 7, 2014**

The regular study session of the Twenty-Eighth Town Council of the Town of Highland was convened at the regular place, the Highland Municipal, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, Indiana, in the plenary meeting chambers on **Monday, July 07, 2014** at the time of 7:16 o'clock p.m.

Silent Roll Call: Councilors Bernie Zemen, Mark Herak, Dan Vassar, and Konnie Kuiper were present. Councilor Dennis Adams was absent owing to a health issue. A quorum was attained. The Clerk-Treasurer Michael W. Griffin was present to memorialize the proceedings.

Also present: Kathryn A. Minchuk, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer; Peter T. Hojnicky, Metropolitan Police Chief; George Georgeff, Metropolitan Police Department Commander; John M. Bach, Public Works Director; Steve Mileusnich of the Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals; Randy Bowman, Electrical Inspector and Ed Dabrowski of CBL Consulting - the IT Consultant were present.

General Substance of Matters Discussed

1. *Discuss funding options for the Public Safety Communications Equipment.* The Town Council and the Clerk-Treasurer discussed the recent presentation of bid prices for various communications equipment in consequence of the Public Safety Access Point Consolidation mandated under state law. It was noted that the Lake County consolidating entity did seek and receive bids for the equipment, so the bid prices were available to all the participating entities, which now includes the Town of Highland.

The Clerk-Treasurer indicated that he received from the Highland Police and Fire Departments the approved equipment list, totaling \$296,524.82 for the Highland Fire Department and totaling \$387,350.32 for the Highland Police Department. The Clerk-Treasurer noted that Motorola Corporation offered lease-purchase financing in the range between 3.09 to 3.25%.

He reported the results of his solicitation for lease financing, with a dollar buy-out at end. The period of repayment was set at three years, with delivery of assets on or around August 2014. The Clerk-Treasurer further indicated that the RFP described lease payments to be due January 15 and July 15 to begin in 2015 payable from resources on deposit to the Public Safety Local Option Income Tax Fund, which is certified to receive \$461,093 for 2014. He further reported that First Financial was the successful respondent with an interest rate of 1.87%. The Town Council would be acting to authorize the purchase of the equipment and to ratify the selection of First Financial at the meeting of July 14, 2014. There was no objection.

2. *Discuss the retirement ordinance and possible changes or clarifications.* The Clerk-Treasurer reminded the Town Council of its recent amendment made to the Highland Municipal Code bringing the mandatory retirement provisions into compliance with the current governing state law, rendering it to be 75 years of age rather than 70.

The Clerk-Treasurer further reminded the Town Council that under the current wording, the mandatory provision applies to all workers part or full time and officers except for elected officials. The Clerk-Treasurer further read a list of workers and board members who would be mandated to leave service at year-end, having attained to 75 years of age in the current year.

The discussion included the merits of having a mandatory retirement age, whether there should be a further amendment to exclude appointed officers of boards and commissions, or make no changes at all. The Town Council determined to deliberate further.

The Clerk-Treasurer indicated that he recommended that a further clarifying amendment be made to include as exempted from the mandatory retirement age as all appointees to boards and commissions. There was no objection voiced to having the necessary amendment ready for the Town Council's consideration at its July 14 meeting.

3. *Discuss sunset provisions for Park Department regarding Lincoln Center.* The Clerk-Treasurer again reported to the Town Council that its amendment to the provisions in Section 11.10.220 of the Highland Municipal Code, which permitted the dispensing and serving of alcohol at the Lincoln Community Center, until December 31, 2013. This sunset provision was installed in order to allow the Town Council to evaluate the change from the prevailing, and historic policy barring alcohol in all parks and park facilities. The Clerk-Treasurer communicated that the Parks and Recreation Superintendent has received booking requests but could not verify if alcohol would be permitted.

It was noted that the Parks and Recreation Department had reported that there were only three bookings last year that involved the dispensing of alcohol. It was further noted that after reviewing the area market, the Parks and Recreation Superintendent had suggested that the department's fees and charges associated with the use of the Lincoln Community Center were higher than most and perhaps not "competitive." These were under review. It was reported that the Parks and Recreation Superintendent would meet with the Town Council at a study session following the plenary business meeting on July 14 regarding this matter and a desired amendment to permit alcohol to be dispensed at the Lincoln Community Center.

The provisions of Section 11.10.220 of the Park Code are provided below:

11.10.220 Alcohol and drugs.

(A) No person shall drink, sell, possess, make a gift or offer for sale any alcoholic beverage or drugs within the parks, nor shall any person within the parks use, administer, receive, offer for sale, possess, or make available to himself, or to any other person or animal, any alcoholic beverage or drugs.

(B) Alcoholic beverages may be sold, dispensed, and consumed in the Lincoln Community Center solely in conjunction with a catered event, banquet, permitted event or special event conducted in and confined to a specific location designated for assemblies and rentals. This authorization is subject to provisions of IC 7.1-1 et seq. and 905 IAC 1 et seq. No person shall use, administer, receive, offer for sale, possess or make available to himself, or to any person or animal any drugs. The authority conferred under the provisions set forth in this subsection (B) *shall expire on December 31, 2013.*

(C) **Effective January 1, 2014.** No person shall drink, sell, possess, make a gift or offer for sale any alcoholic beverage or drugs within Lincoln Center, nor shall any person within Lincoln Center use, administer, receive, offer for sale, possess, or make available to himself, or to any other person or animal, any alcoholic beverage or drugs. [Ord. 1523 § 4, 2012. Code 2000 § 150.41].

4. *Discuss Memorandum with Budget Preparation and Calendar for FY 2015.* The Clerk-Treasurer presented the FY 2015 Budget Calendar and proposed instructions to inform the department heads regarding budget preparation for the coming fiscal year.

The Clerk-Treasurer presented the instructions, which included using 10% increase for health and for dental insurance as a basis for budgeting. It was further noted that there

was no change in the employer or employee rates for the Indiana Public Retirement System Benefits for public safety and civil employees. The instruction included a directive to departments to exclude any pay increases. These would be addressed later after a current working group of the Department heads has expected recommendations regarding new pay rates for existing positions. There was no objection offered.

The Police Chief sought additional guidance regarding the preparation of his budget regarding how to budget with the town participation in the PSAP consolidation. It was noted that the budget should continue to include the resources to support the current radio-dispatching workforce. This would cover any unemployment costs that may be required when the workers may be released in consequence of the consolidation and would provide an alternative to support continued services by the municipality that may be necessary in the transition.

The Police Chief inquired whether he should take steps to hire a thirty-ninth officer, which had been budgeted for FY 2014. The Town Council affirmed moving forward.

The Police Chief further inquired about the expected retirement of the Systems Administrator (IT Administrator), currently assigned to a Corporal in the Police Department and whether this position could be authorized as a civilian post following the retirement of the incumbent. It was noted that owing to State law that prohibited an incumbent worker returning after retirement earlier than thirty (30) days following separation, and the incumbent's allowable paid time off, there might be up to two months where the position would not be occupied. It was further noted that the present back-up worker could be assigned, but that assignment would reduce an available officer for patrol.

The Police Chief still further inquired about the disposition of a credit allowance possessed by the department with canine training kennels. The sentiment of the Town Council was to not obtain a police canine for the department but instead to offer the existing credit allowance to a local, neighboring police department that may be in need. It was further suggested that such an offer may include an understanding permitting the Town of Highland to be allowed use of the police canine when needed.

The Police Chief still further inquired about adding back to the budget resources to restore some animal control services, approximately at the level of \$15,600 or \$16,000.

Finally, the Police Officer explored the possibility of creating a Community Resource Officer, assigning an officer to perform municipal code enforcement in response to a suggestion from Councilor Adams, to allow greater production in code enforcement activity related to property maintenance. It was suggested that some coordination should be sought with the Building Commissioner to refine the idea. It was noted that the position would be established by reassignment and would not add costs to the operating budget.

5. *Delay in Rate Increase Implementation for Solid Waste.* The Clerk-Treasurer reported to the Town Council the mistaken delayed implementation of the scheduled and adopted solid waste management fees increase. The increase was adopted to be effective April 1. The Increase was not entered until July 1. Steps would be taken to recover the lost three months margin of revenue by some form of surcharge. It was noted that a one-time fee of \$2.13 would recover the lost revenue. It was further explained that the Clerk-Treasurer would prepare and include an explanatory letter regarding the matter when a final approach was approved by the Board of Sanitary Commissioners.
6. The Public Works Director reported that U.S. EPA had responded favorably to a proposed interim project that would still be part of an eventual storm sewer overflow (SSO) reduction plan. This interim project would be pursued while the Board would continue to pursue the joint Hammond-Highland Storage option. The interim plan

Town of Highland would add an estimated 8.5 gallons of storage. The siting of storage tanks was discussed and the comparative costs of locating the wastewater storage above ground, slightly below and fully below ground. The Public Works Director further discussed the memorandum prepared by the District Engineer suggesting that having above ground, sealed storage could add an estimated \$6.8 million dollars to the project cost over the above ground approach. It was noted that since the interim project was to move forward, the Board desired to seek preference of the Town Council and clarify the added cost of employing an underground storage tank as a solution versus one that was partially buried with a 10-foot exposure, or one that was constructed to rest above the ground.

As it had when first explored at the study session following plenary business meeting of April 14, 2014, the discussion included the economic development and psychological impact of having visible, above ground wastewater storage tanks. While no vote was conducted, members of the Town Council again expressed the preference for any tanks to be constructed below ground. There were no contrary opinions expressed. It was further noted that there should be an effort to seek exogenous funding that may be employed to offset the added costs, should they be available.

7. The Town Council discussed the possible use of either the special improvement district law or the economic improvement district law to be used to provide regular sidewalk snow removal, care of any landscaping and general maintenance for commercial areas. The Town Council discussed the Kennedy Avenue corridor as a possible applicable location.
8. The Town Council discussed with the Public Works Director the removal of a bump-out located at Fourth Street and Highway Avenue, near the Central Fire Station.

There being no further business necessary or desired to be discussed by the Town Council, the regular study session of the Town Council of **Monday, July 07, 2014**, was adjourned at 8:35 o'clock p.m.

Michael W. Griffin, IAMC/MMC/CPFA/CPFIM/CMO
Clerk-Treasurer